

COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.



"That Government is the best which governs least."

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DEMOCRAT.

V. B. PALMER, Esq., is authorized to act as Agent for the Columbia Democrat, and receipt all monies for subscription and advertising, at his Agency in Philadelphia.

E. W. CARR, Esq., at his General Newspaper Agency Office, Evans' Building, Third Street, opposite the Philadelphia Exchange, is Agent for the COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

Letter from the Gold Region.

The Letter we publish to-day, dated at San Francisco, August 30, 1848, as well as other letters and accounts that we have already published respecting the gold region, goes to show that the apparently exaggerated descriptions that have been published are probably no exaggerations at all, says the Washington Globe. There is a great extent of territory—from forty to fifty thousand square miles—which is in its general character auriferous, and in a degree almost without parallel, is certainly true, too, that much gold has been extracted; that much is known to exist; and it may be assumed that the supply, if not inexhaustible, is very abundant, and will give permanent occupation to miners, if not through all time, yet for many years to come.

But the question may be asked, *Cui bono* is all this metallic wealth? Who is to be enriched? Who is to be benefited? Not all, we imagine, who dig for gold will find wealth. Many will seek, but not all will find. Even so far, digging for the precious ore, when all things come to be considered, has not been invariably the wealth-insuring occupation that many suppose it has been. Everything useful and purchasable at California rose a once, upon the discovery of the gold region, to most enormous prices—prices that had no reference to value, or utility, or to any known or customary standard, but solely to the known or assumed abundance of the precious metal; and these prices seem to have been readily obtained. Whence it appears that the gold miners have not been the most fortunate adventurers of all, but rather those who happen to have a supply of such articles of trade as the others needed; while articles have been sold at from one thousand to five thousand per cent. advance upon the cost, or rather upon what would have been a fair price before the discovery of the gold. But this state of things cannot last long, in our opinion. Prices will come down and gold will cease to be found in such incredible quantities as heretofore.

Thousands and tens of thousands are now wending, or soon will be wending, their way to California. Those who go thither with rational and modest expectations will not be disappointed, probably. They are certain, we suppose, of finding some gold—it may be much. But if they find none, we are not sure they ought to enrol themselves in the category of the unfortunate; for they will find what is infinitely better—a salubrious and delightful climate, with all the softness and amenity of Italy, without her swamps and malaria; a fertile country, and plenty of rich land of all varieties—wooded, prairie, level, undulating, hilly and mountainous too, for those who love the mountains, and adapted to all sorts of rural and agricultural occupations—for planting, farming, and grazing. And we are not by any means certain, that if the whole gold region of fifty thousand square miles, more or less, was merely a healthy, fertile country, without a grain of gold, it would not be, in the long run, a much more valuable one, and be more likely to insure health, wealth, and happiness to the emigrant, than it now does. But, as things now are, he is fully certain of finding one reality if he misses the other. Should he find that his golden visions are not realized and are not realizable, then he finds himself in a healthy, pleasant country, where it is easy to live in comfort without any great exertion, and easy to acquire wealth, or what is better, a competence, with it.

The writer of the letter says, that he believes that "within a twelvemonth, ten thousand souls will have been added to the present population of California." This is a low estimate, we think, and at least

ten thousand under the mark. We have little doubt, that by the first of September next, there will have been twenty thousand or more added to the number in the country on the 30th of August last.

One passage in the letter we have read with much regret, which is:

"Every man engaged in hunting gold, and every one that visits the gold region, goes armed to the teeth. Scenes of violence occur; there is no security for life or property." &c.

This is deplorable. We hope this state of things is not quite so bad, though, and we have seen published letters that give a much more flattering account of the morals and deportment of those who are digging for gold. But it must be confessed that this is a pursuit not well calculated to improve and elevate the moral sentiments of those who are actually engaged in it—we mean those who perform the manual labor required by the several processes of extracting and manipulating. But the introduction of law and regulations will no doubt remove much of the evil, if it cannot remove all.

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug 30, 1848.

MY DEAR SIR: Since my last nothing very important has occurred here amongst the gold diggers. The excitement continues, and every day, almost, vessels are arriving, loaded with goods and passengers; the latter destined for the gold washings. Much sickness prevails amongst the diggers, and very many have left, sick, and others are leaving, for their homes and the more healthy portions of the country, intending to return to their labors after the sickly season shall have passed, which will be after the first of October.

By the first of November I presume over four thousand persons will be engaged in the gold placers, washing out the precious metal. The same remarkable success continues, as heretofore, to attend the labors of the diggers. Ten dollars a day, on an average, is the lowest possible estimate any one puts upon the receipts of each one of the two or three thousand people now at work. Almost every day we hear of some new discovery in some before unexplored part of the country, and large amounts of gold are readily obtained, in the usual mode, by washing in tin pans, shallow buckets, and rude machines called cradles.

Wherever explorations have been made to the east and south of the Sacramento, on the streams and rivulets issuing from the western side of the California range of mountains, as far down as Los Angeles, (or City of the Angels,) gold has been found. Just reflect a moment. Here is an extent of country varying from fifty to seventy-five or one hundred miles in width, and between four and five hundred miles long, where a man can go in, almost at random, with his tin pan, jack-knife, or pickaxe, and, in the course of three or four weeks, wash out his one, two, five, and in some instances ten and twenty thousand dollars of gold-dust or ore. I know of an instance where a company of seven men, who had been five weeks at work, returned with nine thousand dollars each. Three thousand dollars a month, for an industrious man, in ordinary diggings, is a fair average. Many, who hit upon some prolific diggings, or some rare place of deposit, will get that much in a few days. It is really most wonderful; and the wonder increases, when you consider that there seems to be no end to it. In other words, those who occupy the ground where the gold was found in any quantity, (say the middle of May last,) are doing about as good business now as they were then.

The common laboring men in the country are becoming the capitalists of California. Mechanics of all trades, barbers, cooks, stewards, day-laborers, servants of all grades, (and I had almost said, sexes, too,) are above being hired, unless at enormous wages. The why is, that they can go to the gold washings and wash out their ten, and perhaps fifty or one hundred dollars a day. The black fellow who is steward at the hotel here gets his one hundred and fifty dollars a month; the black cook, ditto; assistants, fifty and sixty dollars a month. Five and ten dollars a day is the common wages here for mechanics and laboring men. Of course the expenses of living are very great, and so they must continue for some time to come. Those who are sent out here as officers of the new territorial government to be established, (and very soon it is to be hoped,) ought to be paid handsome salaries; if they are not, they will find it anything but lucrative business, and the Government will be unable to retain any man in office six months after he reaches here.

A large emigration is expected into the country across the continent this fall. As the news of the gold discoveries reaches Oregon, many will flock in from there. Already they have commenced coming in from the Pacific coast of South America and the Isles of the sea. A large portion of the foreign population of the Sandwich Islands, who are not in some way pentioned upon, or who have not a chance to flee to the Government, have already arrived or are now on their way here. Within a twelvemonth, I believe ten thousand souls will have been added to the present population of California.

In addition to this gold, the richest quicksilver mines ever known have been discovered in dif-

ferent parts of the country. I visited one two weeks since, about seventy-five miles from here, which has been worked for some months. It belongs, I believe, to an English gentleman, by the name of Forbes, residing at Tevic or Mazatlan, Mexico. Some of the ore yields seventy per cent. of quicksilver. I saw sixty-seven pounds of quicksilver extracted from one hundred and fifty pounds of ore. Thirty per cent. is about the average yield. Silver, lead, and coal have also been discovered. Iron is common. Altogether, it is probably the richest mineral country in the world.

But ore does not constitute all the wealth of California. This northern section of the country, many parts of it, is capable of being made a good agricultural country. The whole of it is admirably adapted for grazing. In my travels, I have seen as fine wheat and corn-fields, potato patches, vegetables, fruits, (such as apples, pears, peaches, and quinces,) and vineyards, as I ever saw in any country. In the race after gold, the farms, gardens, &c., are now almost entirely neglected. Still, they show what the country can produce, if properly cultivated. Within a range of fifty or seventy-five miles from here, there are four very good grist mills, and three or four saw mills, doing a fine business.

To the south, at Los Angeles and that vicinity, fruits and vineyards are cultivated quite extensively. Very good brandy and excellent wine is made there. All the towns in California have been, for two or three months, and still are, pretty much deserted by the male population, who are digging for gold. The whole country (with the exception of the valleys of the Sacramento and its principal tributaries, and that vicinity, during the months of July, August, and September) is remarkably healthy. Disease (except fevers, and fever and ague, during the months and in the vicinity above stated) is almost a stranger to the climate of California. This town, and in fact all the towns along the coast, is as healthy, perhaps, as any part of the world.

But now let me reverse this picture. The discovery of this gold has brought, and is daily bringing, into the country a most motley and, to say the least, a most suspicious population. The profligate, the idle, the gambler, the runaway sailor and soldier, the bankrupt in fortune and character, and the desperate adventurer, from almost every nation under heaven, (saying nothing of the now disbanded regiment of New York volunteers,) constitute, at present, perhaps a majority of the population of California, or, more correctly, of the gold region. In the race after gold, religion and morality are scouted at; education is not dreamed of; farms are neglected, and crops are deserted and left to rot in and upon the ground; dissipation and profanity are almost universal; there are no laws for the governance of the country; and if there were, there is no power in the country that could enforce them. Robberies and murders are committed, and their perpetrators go unpunished. Every man engaged in hunting gold, and every one who visits the gold region, goes armed to the teeth. Scenes of violence occur; there is no security for life or property; and thus things must remain until a regular and organized territorial government is organized at Washington over California, and a strong military (regular) force sent out to sustain it.

For some time to come, a residence in California will be anything but agreeable or desirable. As I said before, this state of things is principally confined to the gold and mineral districts. At this place, the society is comparatively respectable and orderly. For the honor and credit of our country, whose territory this now is; for the safety and well-being of the respectable and well-disposed inhabitants of the country; for the sake of law and order, of religion and sound morality, the Congress of the United States should immediately organize a territorial government over California; and a man of exalted moral character, of high reputation as a statesman and jurist, of the strictest integrity, of decided firmness, and of high moral courage, should be selected by the President for Governor. The judicial officers, most especially, should be men of the same stamp. In fact, all the subordinate officers of the new government of this country should be selected from amongst the best men at home, who will be willing to come out here. In addition to this civil and moral force, a strong military (regular) force should also be sent out to aid the civil arm of government, in case of any emergency. As a matter of course, this will be headquarters hereafter for our Pacific naval force, and one or more vessels will be here constantly; so that I have nothing to urge on that head. I will simply say, this is most desirable, as they can act as a guard for the protection of our merchant and whale ships, which now are deserted by their crews almost as soon as their anchors are let go—the crews running away for the gold washings. Captains are obliged to pay fifty and sixty dollars a month for common sailors, and they have the greatest difficulty in finding crews at that price for wages.

Colleges.

There are now in the United States 119 colleges—13 under the denomination of the Baptists; 9 of the Episcopalians; 13 of the Methodists; 14 of the Roman Catholics; 9 of the Congregationalists; and the remaining 61 mostly Presbyterians.

Poetry.

For the Columbia Democrat.

The Unfortunate Emigrant.

BY A SCHOOL BOY.

He is gone—beneath the cold sod they have laid him,
And none there remains his departure to mourn;
He is gone—the swift-winged death-angel bade him
Speed away from the sorrows so long he had borne.

Born 'neath the sway of a government tyrannical,
Reared in the land of oppression a slave;
No rivings of fancy, or rapturous chimerical
Caused him the danger of oceans to brave.

But the sound, so extatic, of freedom had caught him,
For the sweet sound of freedom re-echoed afar,
And his mate abhorrence of tyranny brought him
To Columbia—guided by liberty's star.

Kind friends had he there, in his own native land
And endeared companions, who bid him God speed,
Denating forever the grasp of his hand
Caused the fond hearts of many, at parting, to bleed.

But the pleasures, so fondly, he hoped, would
Attend him, the blessings, he hoped, to enjoy,
Like the rainbow, receding, would only betray and
By the varied reflections, which led to decay.

To thee is life pleasing? hath nothing depressed thee?
Oh! mourn the hard fate of the one we lament;
Art thou discontented? though plenty has blessed thee,
Oh! let his sad history teach thee content.

But now he's released from all his vexations;
He has sunk into sleep—quiet—serene—
The storms of adversity, and deep tribulations
Forever were hushed, at the close of the scene.

No—cares and afflictions no more shall assail thee,
Which, through the whole course of thy life
Did almost hourly, and ceaselessly, assail thee,
Though none there be left, save the mute to bewail thee.

Sweet comfort beyond the dark tomb thou hast found,
By J. C. S.

Roaring creek, July 21, 1848.

The Summer Flower.

BY J. T. QUINBERRY.

I would not call thee back again,
My lovely summer flower;
I would not have thee suffer pain,
Or feel again its power.

Thou art sleeping in the quiet tomb,
Where no sound of grief can fall;
Or as an angel thou dost bloom,
Where naught of death can pall.

Thy sweet image shall ever dwell
Fresh on my memory's page,
And be the ever present spell
Of glad declining age.

The Old and New Year.

I heard a sick man's dying sigh,
And an infant's wail of laughter;
The old year went with merrily by,
The new came dancing after,
Let sorrows shed her felonious tear,
Let revelry hold her lullaby;
Bring boughs of yew for the bier,
Fling roses on the bier;
Mutes for to wait on the funeral state,
Pages to pour the wine,
And a Requiem for Forty-nine,
And a Requiem for Forty-nine.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HARRISBURG, Jan. 2d, 1849.

Col. Tate: The members present assembled in the House of Representatives to-day, at 12 o'clock, when (after the return of the elections had been read,) on motion, the members proceeded to select a speaker. The Democrats voted for their old and most excellent speaker, Gen. Packer. The Whigs voted for H. S. Evans, of Chester co., and the Nationalists voted for Thos. J. Herring. On the first ballot W. F. Packer had 49 votes, H. S. Evans 43, Mr. Herring 4 votes. Mr. Packer stood for S. Eggleston, of Berks, Mr. Evans voted for F. C. Smith, of Philadelphia, Mr. Herring voted for A. Robt. After the 3d ballot (on vote) the members adjourned.

Wednesday, Jan 3d. Met at 11 o'clock. Proceeded to elect a Speaker, five yeas or votes but no candidate having a majority of the whole number of votes. Adjourned to meet at 11 o'clock on Thursday.

Thursday, Jan 4th. This morning the Whigs and Nationalists voted once, Mr. Evans and the Whigs, the Whigs adjourned to meet to-morrow. Messrs. Cooper, Evans, Eggleston, &c. made speeches out of the House, but no question was brought up and adjourned to vote. After the 10th ballot, adjourned.

Friday, Jan 5th. The full number of members (110) present. On motion, proceeded to the 12th vote. No choice in motion presented to the vote, and the result was no choice. The 21st vote resulted as follows; but on the 22d ballot, the Democrats with the aid of the Nationalists elected Gen. W. F. PACKER Speaker.

There was no compromise or arrangement made with the Nationalists. They voted for Gen. Packer, because they thought he was best qualified to discharge the duties of the station. The House is therefore organized and ready to proceed to business. Yours, REPORTER.

The World in a Nut-Shell.

A fearful mortality has broken out among some poor colored people, inhabiting low ground in the vicinity of Cincinnati.

If California is admitted into the Union why can't the inhabitants vote? Because they are all miners.

The Legislature of Louisiana have appropriated \$1,000 to support public schools for free children of color.

The Park Theatre at New York will be rebuilt. The contracts have been signed, sealed and delivered, and the work commenced.

A Locomotive, with a full complement of passengers and editors, passed over the first eight miles of the Chicago and Galena Railroad on the 22d ult.

Gen. Taylor writes that he will be in Louisville, Ky., on the 14th or 15th of February, on his way to Washington.

Hon. Levi Chamberlain, has been nominated as the Whig candidate for Governor of New Hampshire, at the election in March next.

Green the reformed Gambler, is about to publish a paper in the city of New York, called the National Guard.

Why is Victoria twice the sailor her Uncle William ever was? Because he was only a royal tar, and she is a royal tar-tar.

The New York papers are anxious to have the United States erect a mint on the spot lately occupied by the Park theatre.

The printed indictments against Mr. Duffy, of the Irish Nation, measures about one hundred feet in length.

Morse's line of Telegraph now runs from New York direct to Philadelphia. The wires are carried across the Hudson at Anthony's Nose.

Mr. Jacob Throp, of North Haven, caught in the river in that town, on the 18th ult., a shark weighing about 5 lbs.

The Legislature of New Hampshire has passed a plurality law for the election of Members of Congress and Presidential Electors.

Book-keeping will not receive much attention in California at present; a pocket account will be the only popular one. Pockets should be lined with sheet iron.

The culture of the grape is pursued in California with much success. The wine made there from it is said to be excellent, resembling the light German Wines.

Dr. Franklin, in speaking of education, says: "If a man empties his purse into his head, no one can take it from him."

The Lower Classes—Who are They? The toiling millions, the laboring man and woman, the farmer, the mechanic, the artisan, the inventor, the producer? Far from it!—These are nature's nobility—God's favorites—the salt of the earth.—No matter whether they are high or low in station, rich or poor in pelf, conspicuous or humble in position, they are surely the "upper circles" in the order of nature, whatever the fictitious distinctions of society, fashionable or unfashionable, decree. It is not low—it is the duty, privilege, and pleasure for the great man and the whole-souled woman, to earn what they possess, to work their own fortunes. Some may rank the classes already alluded to as only relatively low, and in fact the middle classes. We insist they are absolutely the very highest. If there is a class of human beings on earth, who may properly be denominated low, it is those who spend without earning, who consume without producing, who dissipate the earnings of any fathers or relatives without doing any thing in aid of themselves.

Robert Blum to his Wife.

The following is a copy of the letter written by the unfortunate ROBERT BLUM, the Austrian Democrat, (shot by order of WINDISCHGRATZ,) to his wife, an hour before his murder: "My dear good Wife,—Farewell, farewell for the time men call eternity, but which will not be so. Bring up our—now only your—children to be honest men; so they will never disgrace their fathers name. Sell our little property with the aid of our friends. God and all good men will help you also. All that I feel and would say at this moment escapes me in tears; only once more, then, farewell, my dearest. Consider our children a treasure of which you must make the best use, and honor thus the memory of your faithful husband. Farewell, farewell; receive the last kisses of Robert. Vienna, Nov. 1848, five o'clock in the morning; at six all will be over.—P. S. I had forgotten the rings; on that of our betrothal I press for you a last kiss; my seal-ring is for Hans, the watch for Richard, the diamond stud for Ida, the chain for Alfred, as memorials. All the rest divide as you please. They are coming, farewell."

Why is a printer like a lawyer? Because he likes to have a case before him.

ORIGINAL ESSAYS.

The Engagement.

A Sketch—By Nondescript.

It is a long time since then. Youth and manhood arrive and pass away, but the recollection of this event is yet fresh and green in my memory. Nothing can ever efface the impression. Its anniversary is kept sacred, and upon that evening especially, when the mind, by contemplation, is wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement: the whole scene passes vividly and painfully so, before my eyes.

I was quite young, and Mary was still my junior. Formed as she was both mentally and personally in nature's finest mould, no wonder she would strike the heart of one so young, susceptible and romantic. I would describe her if I could—but no pen could do justice to her long dark eye-lashes, to her deep brown hair, falling in ringlets round her head and neck, to her clear, but half Southern complexion, to her fine countenance lighted up by her flashing eye—and to her delicate and fragile form—I can see her but can not paint her—Our parents lived in the same village, and Mary and myself were much together. When the evenings were pleasant, we usually walked out together to a rustic seat near the edge of a beautiful stream, and there indulged in our delicious dreams of love and future happiness.

The scene of this sketch is laid on one of these, to me delightful evenings. It was in June, and Mary, and I had lingered longer than usual at our accustomed haunt. We returned home slowly, and when we arrived there, passed at once into the parlor; and divesting ourselves of the accoutrements which convenience and prudence suggested should be worn in our walk, we mechanically, as it were, walked to the window. The moon was near its full, and the trees in front of the house broke and variegated the silver moonlight, making the scene if possible still more lovely. We leaned upon the window sill—her left hand was clasped in my right—and my left arm gently encircled her waist.

Moonlight evenings are dangerous to lovers. There is a delicious sensation pervading the senses, and leading them captive. Moonlight nights were made for love, says the Poet. How long we had stood thus I know not, nor can I recall any of the subject-matter of our conversation. I was bewildered, lost in an ecstasy of delight. And I only recovered my self possession when I found myself on the eve of a declaration of love. I do not recollect what I said. I only know that in a moment almost I had reviewed our whole period of acquaintance, endeavoring to prove that I had loved her, by reminding her of what I had done to deserve and win her affection.

I never was eloquent before, my tongue seemed unloosed, words came unsought to my aid, actions long forgotten came vividly up to my remembrance, and bore me forward in my declaration. Who could not be eloquent with an angel inspiring him? For a moment she did not answer, but unconsciously as it were leaned her head against my breast and pressed my hand closer in hers. "Mary, I asked, will you be mine?" She looked up in my face, her eyes answered to mine, and she sunk in embrace. Our lips met. It was the first kiss of youth and love. The bliss of that hour I shall never forget. We remained thus for some time, I thought I heard some one breathe in the room; turning round who should I see standing near us but Mary's Father.

Here was a situation. Retaining Mary's hand in mine, I addressed him in our behalf, asking for indulgence of our passion and his consent to our union, when circumstances should render it expedient—Our request was granted and giving us his blessing he left the room.

Shortly after I left the village for a distant city, intending to return after some time and to take Mary with me. Before my return she sickened and suddenly died! I need not go on. My fate is sealed, and— I have nothing left to care for now, since my poor Mary died!"